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ABSTRACT

Introductory materials for these proceedings list acknowledgements and roundtable participants, provide the roundtable agenda, and present both the roundtable goal--to improve the quality of community information services in California public libraries through the development of a plan and program focus for the California State Library--and four objectives related to the goal. The opening remarks of Gary E. Strong, California State Librarian, are summarized, and the full text is provided for the presented paper, "Overview and History of Information and Referral Services--A National and State Perspective," by Jane Light, Director, Redwood City Public Library. Also included are summaries of participant discussions of the following topics: (1) expectations for the meeting; (2) strengths of libraries in providing information and referral (I&R) services; (3) elements of I&R service delivery; (4) key players and their roles in I&R services; (5) needs in providing I&R service delivery; (6) what the state library should be doing in the next two to three years to promote I&R; and (7) an outline of follow-up activities. Six I&R need areas and methods to address them are included in that discussion. A brief summary of the closing remarks of Yolanda Cuesta, Bureau Chief, Library Development Services Bureau, concludes the proceedings. (KM)

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CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

LIBRARY COMMUNITY INFORMATION ROUNDTABLE

PROCEEDINGS

December 4-5, 1986

Sacramento, California

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LIBRARY COMMUNITY INFORMATION ROUNDTABLE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION

On December 4-5, 1986, selected participants met as the Library Community Information Roundtable at the California State Library in Sacramento. The stated purpose of the Roundtable was:

Goal

To improve the quality of community information services in California public libraries through the development of a plan and program focus for the California State Library.

Objectives

Identify needs, concerns, and problems of local library information and referral programs; identify gaps in service delivery; develop mechanisms for addressing these needs and gaps.

Identify key information and referral players in the state and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Identify statewide policy issues and mechanisms for addressing these issues.

Develop short and long range strategies for the improvement of information and referral services in libraries.

Definitions

Community Information: information about resources in the community, which can include people, agencies, events, organizations.

Information & Referral (I&R): one methodology of providing community information; a linking process. Many people interpret I&R as human service- or social service-related information, as opposed to other types of community information. The Alliance of Information & Referral Services (AIRS) provides active linking of people in need with the appropriate agency or service and assists in long range community planning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Resource Group
Linda Crowe, Peninsula Library System
Debra Miller, San Diego County Library
Ruth Foley Metz, Bay Area Library & Information System
Richard Stahl, Fresno County Free Library
Jacquelyn (Jackie) Thresher, Westchester Library System, Elmsford New York
Norman Maas, TIP Service, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan
Dr. Terence Crowley, Division of Library & Information Science, San Jose State University
Jane Light, Redwood City Library

Staff
Carol Williams Bryant, I&R Specialist, California State Library

Facilitation
Marilyn M. Snider, Snider & Associates, Oakland, California

Summary
Jayne M. Becker, Becker Communications, Oakland, California

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Barbara Alberson, SEED Project Coordinator, State Department of Aging, Sacramento
Richard Beebe, CALL I&R Program Director, Los Angeles County Public Library, Montebello
Carol Williams Bryant, I&R Specialist, California State Library, Sacramento
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Dorothy Sandborn, Director, Auburn-Placer County Library, Auburn
Richard Stahl, I&R Coordinator, Fresno County Free Library, Fresno
Gary E. Strong, California State Librarian, California State Library, Sacramento

AGENDA

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1986

Welcome
Gary E. Strong, California State Librarian

Format and Logistics
Carol Williams Bryant, I&R Specialist, California State Library

Introduction of Facilitator and Recorder
Marilyn M. Snider, Facilitator, Snider & Associates
Jayne Becker, Recorder

Roles of Facilitator, Recorder and Participants

Review of Goals of the Conference

Review of Agenda

Introduction of Participants

Overview and History of I&R Services: A National and State Perspective
Jane Light, Library Director, Redwood City Public Library

Group Discussion:
What are the strengths of libraries in providing I&R Services?

What are the elements of I&R Service delivery?

Who are the players and what are their roles in I&R service delivery?

Group Teamwork Exercise

Identify and Select Needs in Providing I&R Service Delivery
Brainstorm
Rank order
Select six priority needs

Define Who and What Processes are Needed to Address Two of the Identified Needs

Summary and Preview of Tomorrow's Agenda

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1986

Welcome

Review of Agenda

Feedback from Participants

Define Who and What Processes are Needed to Address the Remaining Four Identified Needs

Review and Revise if Necessary the Who's and Processes for the Six Identified Needs

What Should the State Library be Doing in the Next Two to Three Years to Help Promote I&R?

Next Steps

Summary of the Roundtable

Closing Remarks
Yolanda Cuesta, Bureau Chief, Library Development Services Bureau, California State Library

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening Remarks
Gary E. Strong, California State Librarian

Gary Strong welcomed the Roundtable participants and expressed the belief of the State Library and the California Library Services Board that information and referral (I&R) is an important part of library services. Up to the present time, funding for library I&R services has been provided through grants under the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) and from local government and public library budgets.

The goals of the Roundtable were to give assistance and ideas to the State Library in planning for future I&R services. Specifically, Mr. Strong asked that the Roundtable identify next steps to support the development of I&R services; recommend steps that I&R providers within libraries could take to further develop their services; and identify steps that the State Library and I&R providers could take together to raise the awareness of the need for I&R services and to clarify the role of I&R in relation to library reference services.

Expectations of Participants

After the State Librarian's opening remarks, the Roundtable participants indicated what outcomes they expected in order for the meeting to be a success for them personally.

* evidence of a state policy on I&R from State Library
* recommendation to State Library for state policy on I&R
* ways to foster coordination between library and agencies on aging for I&R services
* specific methods for maintaining awareness and visibility of I&R services
* ways to get general public to know about I&R services provided
* address providing I&R to corporations
* ways to get State Library to support I&R
* articulated state policy which provides support to community I&R
* direction, focus for State Library I&R program
* share information on what we do as I&R providers
* financial support to keep I&R going
* State Library develop plan for I&R
* more information on what's happeninig in the state and in other agencies in I&R
* meaningful, useful product
* formal relationship between State Library and CAIRS (California Alliance of Information and Referral Services)
* sense that climate of public librarianship will change so

that there is place in public libraries for people now in library schools who are or become interested in I&R

* plan which includes how libraries and social services need/can work together to provide I&R
* offer perspective of minority services and have product/plan reflect that perspective
* honest sharing about what needs to happen for I&R at state level
* develop plan, like that in place for literacy
* contribute, and come out with state policy

Overview and History of Information & Referral Services: A National and State Perspective

Jane Light, Library Director, Redwood City Public Library

A national history of I&R services begins in the late 1960's with an experimental project by Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Library. The experiment failed because of its isolation from the rest of the library. But as a result of this first project, a new model was designed and a three year (1972-75) grant from the Department of Education was secured to start the Neighborhood Information Centers (NIC) Project in Detroit, Houston, Cleveland, Queens and Atlanta.

The Detroit center, particularly, was a startling success, largely due to the commitment of its director, Clara S. Jones. Called The Information Place (TIP), the center was integrated into branch library services and received massive publicity through community outreach and media.

Throughout the rest of the 1970's I&R projects sprang up at libraries around the country, with varying degrees of success. In response to this demonstrated interest, as well as the needs of libraries in providing I&R services, The Public Library Association (PLA) formed an I&R committee in 1978.

When the committee achieved section status in 1981, the new PLA Community Information Section (CIS) broadened its focus to include the full range of non-published community information. The Section now has over 900 members. In 1985 the PLA published

revised guidelines for establishing community I&R services in public libraries. A new Planning and Roles Setting Manual for Public Libraries to be published in 1987 by PLA will postulate I&R as one of eight major activities to which libraries may direct their efforts and emphasis.

In addition to their PLA efforts, librarians participate in the Alliance of Information and Referral Services (AIRS) with the goal of increasing understanding and cooperation among all I&R providers.

The history of I&R, from a California perspective, originates with the use of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) funding by the California State Library to fund demonstration projects such as the Peninsula Library System's Community Information Project. Exposure of model I&R projects at conferences and programs sponsored by the California Library Association (CLA) and the California State Library (CSL) resulted in California Library Services Act (CLSA) funding for further demonstration projects beginning in 1979. Recently there has been a resurgence of LSCA-funded I&R projects, many for automation and for services based on interagency cooperation.

What is needed now is an articulated CSL policy regarding Information & Referral services. A basic part of that policy is a working definition of the term as CSL uses it. Many librarians prefer the term, "community information" to describe their services, because the term suggests a more inclusive information base and a less intensive service than what is traditionally

termed "I&R" by social services professionals. Many human service agencies provide the traditional, or "casework", I&R, whereas few libraries do.

A State Library policy should recognize that librarians are accomplished networkers and skilled at building files and administering information functions. It should recognize that a unique aspect of community information is that I&R data is being collected and presented in original and coherent form.

A policy should be flexible enough to allow libraries to react to the needs of the community and maximize their own resources. Already, some libraries provide a broad-based range of community information while others provide services to special groups to fill a service gap.

Currently, however, I&R is still a "fringy" idea, viewed as expendable by most library schools, library directors and boards, and library reference staff. The Roundtable should encourage the State Library to use the literacy program as a model in articulating and disseminating a state policy on I&R. The components of such a policy would include education of the library community, funding and other incentives to provide services, and publicity. The State Library is in an excellent position to encourage and influence the role of public libraries and providers of I&R and general community information.

Strengths of Libraries in Providing I&R Services

Participants then identified the strengths of libraries in providing I&R services.

Library staff members are skilled at packaging, managing, classifying and administering information and at networking. They are willing to experiment, and are learning to publicize services and to deal better with a new clientele attracted by I&R services. They are perceived as polite and approachable. Trained in reference interview skills, they are good at determining what people's real needs are and have an obsession with finding the answers. I&R in libraries can begin with a staff that has some professional background and is a good place to incorporate new professional backgrounds.

The library itself is a non-threatening environment, a place where people come in with a sense of safety and confidentiality, because the library is known for serving all people without censoring. The library, a part of city or county government, has ties with both governmental and non-governmental organizations and has access to the tax deductible market. It has a community-based perspective, a local focus and is accessible by a spectrum of age groups. Its facilities are numerous, open long hours, are centrally located, and sometimes mobile. As a centralized collector of information, the library already has a broad range of information available and many different resources upon which to draw.

Elements of I&R Service Delivery

Roundtable participants agreed that elements could be defined as the functions, parts, pieces and tasks involved in I&R service delivery. Through brainstorming the participants identified the following elements.

Functions and tasks include organizing, evaluation, publicizing availability, funding, follow up with clients, collecting data, coordination with other I&R providers and agencies, assessment, training, disseminating information, advocacy, networking, updating files, referral, information, multi-lingual services, space, feedback from referral agencies, record keeping, education of public, continuing education, staff development, staff career ladders, staff support in dealing with stress, reporting, outreach, lobbying, dealing with clients in crisis, empowerment of clients, integrating with host agency, interagency agreements and marketing.

Resources include volunteers and staff, resource files, telephones, classification system, products, manuals, videotapes, electronic computerized equipment, administration, leadership, organizational commitment, professional commitment, financial commitment, protocols and standards, ethical standards, listening skills, knowing the limits, community support and vision.

Key Players and their Roles

Roundtable participants then identified key players and their roles in I&R services.

Key Players	Roles
Clients	consumer advocates publicity provider needs assessment evaluator legitimizer political power
Federal Information Service	provider consumer disseminator of material competitor for funding
National and State Professional Organizations	legitimizers publicity advocate educator standards trainers networking technical assistance conveners products conceptual support
Legislators, other Elected Officials	determine who is funded policy/priority consumer staff are providers needs assessment legitimize
State Departments	funders providers technical assistance trainers evaluation same as State Library

State Library	determine organization/role definition funding advocacy conceptual support provider leadership technical assistance publicity central point of contact disseminator of information statewide networking
Dept of Social Services (county, and other county depts.)	funder provider consumer follow up needs assessment evaluator direct service provider develop resources policy
Local Government	publicity funding conceptual support provider client/consumer advocacy determine organization/role definition evaluate
Police	needs assessment crisis intervention provider consumer educator publicity
Fire	same as police
Private, for-profit I&R Providers	target groups, specialized information COMPETITOR provider consumer needs assessor develop materials/produce products

Non-profit general I&R providers	provider of I&R consumer needs assessment networking products training evaluator competitor publicity file development advocacy follow up technical assistance community organizers trendsetters
Libraries	same as non-profit general I&R providers, with differences in intensity, emphasis
Library Administrators	leadership funding commitment legitimizer role definer
Reference Librarians, Library Staff	product development provider of I&R consumer data management needs assessment publicity educator statistical collection

Library Schools	consultants training research education legitimizer career development recruitment produce products guidance consumers
Non-profit Specialized I&R Programs	same as non-profit general I&R, with specialized information and target groups
Worksite Employee Assistance Programs	recommend policy service to clients consumers competitors provider to special client group (in house) follow up needs assessment produce materials evaluate
Direct Service Agencies (to which we refer)	consumer advocate provider publicity needs assessment evaluator legitimizer political power network develop materials follow up
Friends, Neighbors, Word of Mouth (Gatekeepers)	publicity provider consumer needs assessment

Teachers	needs assessment provider of I&R consumer crisis intervention educator publicity
Individual Counselors	service to clients consumers gatekeepers
Hotlines	provider crisis intervention consumer direct service provider competitor for funding/publicity needs assessor produce products
Church/Clergy	provider of I&R needs assessment disseminate information funder direct service provider follow up consumer
Public Health Educators	health-related target population group clients rather than one-to-one training produce products needs assessment funder consumer publicity networking community organization advocacy

Phone Company	provider publicity information resource tool/entre into I&R produce products
"911"	crisis intervention tool
Funders	publicity funding support evaluation/monitoring policy legitimizers define roles priority setting consumer
United Way	funder publicity training service provider consumer needs assessor networker evaluation products legitimizer convener competitor
Software Developers	provide tools produce products training

Group Exercise

After participating in a group exercise, the Roundtable offered the following ideas on what they had learned about working together well as a group: listen to each other; participate; individual ideas shared; be flexible; discover talents; assign roles; interject humor; build on ideas; give positive feedback; spend time thinking; agree on rules, process; give in with grace; consensus; be aware of time; all have different perspectives.

Identify Needs in Providing I&R Service Delivery

The Roundtable brainstormed needs, then selected priorities through a rank-ordering process. The tally of votes is recorded at the left of each idea.

5 funding

2 staffing

5 networking and networking processes

4 funding mechanisms

1 knowing what's possible and what's not (potentials and limitations as an I&R provider

5 developing staff skills

0 evaluation mechanisms

1 assessment of client needs

3 better classification system

0 feedback process to other agencies re: needs assessment

2 staff acceptance of I&R service

2 communication to share information and data

1 more relevance in subject headings

0 information resources

1 visibility

3 clear distinction between community information and "case work" type services

7 commitment from State Library

4 commitment from local library leadership

4 promotion of I&R to libraries that are not currently doing I&R

5	training
3	maintain a high priority for the service
5	standards
2	publicity
1	currency and maintenance of data - input and output
0	information tools and products
0	market niche
1	appropriate software
3	reaching library nonusers
4	understanding role as it relates to other I&R agencies
1	identify and document I&R options statewide
2	integration of service and staff
2	protocols
0	expert referral
1	information about automation services
0	library policies
1	powers of agreement between agencies to do one function
3	assistance from library schools and schools of social work
0	input from consumers
1	working for overall goal of providing service to clients
1	programmatic status within library
3	organizational commitment
1	promotion of I&R by library schools

Summary of Needs

Having identified forty-two important needs, the Roundtable discussed, prioritized and decided there were six need areas that should be the focus of immediate further work:

- Commitment from the State Library
- Funding and Funding Mechanisms
- Training/Skills Development
- Review and Promote Standards/Guidelines for Quality Service
- Define and Develop Networking Roles and Networking Processes
- Promote I&R as a Concept of Community Information (including human services) to Libraries that Do Not Now Have It

Define Who and What Processes are Needed to Address Needs

The identified needs were then clarified and further defined as to how and by whom the needs could be addressed.

NEED: COMMITMENT FROM STATE LIBRARY

- Technical assistance (e.g. software/hardware consultation, classification schemes and systems, evaluation, program implementation, needs assessment, planning) - to be provided by State Library consultants and expertise from outside Library.
- Articulation of plan that describes the role of the library as community information provider in the context of statewide I&R - leadership by State Library, with other players, e.g. CAIRS and CLA.
- Promote integration of library role in I&R to the public, to libraries and to other state agencies involved in I&R - leadership by State Library, with other players, e.g. CAIRS and CLA.
- Exhibit leadership in legitimizing and integrating I&R in libraries - the State Library, State Librarian.
- Assume position of leadership in developing a partnership with different I&R players - CAIRS, CLA, Department of Aging, Department of Social Services.
- Take leadership for obtaining state funds for I&R - State Librarian.

NEED: FUNDING AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

- In the 1987-88 LSCA cycle, the State Library will recruit an eligible LSCA applicant to submit a proposal to:
  a. Identify existing sources of funding and funding mechanisms.
  b. Develop strategies for accessing sources of funding.
  c. Explore and recommend new sources of funding in our own and other disciplines.

  This process should include involvement of representatives of I&R from other disciplines as the project advisory committee. This report would be broadly disseminated through CLA and CAIRS.

NEED: TRAINING/SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- By December 1987, the California State Library will assess the training needs and inventory of current offerings of a sample of libraries, library schools, schools of social work and I&R providers. This should be done in close consultation with CAIRS and PLA.
- By December 1987, the California State Library will provide access to a file of trainers and training products to libraries and anyone else who has need for information services training.

NEED: REVIEW AND PROMOTE STANDARDS/GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY SERVICE

- By summer 1987, the State Library will use PLA guidelines to evaluate new I&R and I&R-related LSCA proposals to ensure development of quality services. Carol Williams Bryant will inform applicants that they need to refer to PLA guidelines in developing proposals and that proposals will be evaluated against the guidelines.
- By January 1987, the Peninsula Library System will submit LSCA project proposal for a major statewide conference on Library Community Information by September 1988, whose program includes standards.
- At each LSCA cycle, the proposal packet will include admonition to refer to PLA guidelines for I&R and I&R-related proposals and that guidelines will be used in evaluation of proposals.
- By March 1987, an ad hoc group (Richard Beebe, Terence Crowley, Jane Light, Carol Williams Bryant) will review PLA guidelines and AIRS standards for their current applicability to California libraries and communicate any recommended changes to CAIRS and CLA requesting their endorsement. If changes are necessary, CAIRS and CLA will write to sponsoring agencies with recommendations.

Note: Standards need to be considered in the training and skills development and the I&R promotion areas, as they are developed.

NEED: DEFINE AND DEVELOP NETWORKING ROLE AND NETWORKING PROCESSES

- Ongoing, the State Library will participate in CAIRS and PLA-CIS.
- By February 1987, CLA will create a specific focus in CLA for people interested in I&R.
- By February 1987, the President of CLA will identify members who are interested in implementing the above focus and will create an educational event as part of the 1987 CLA conference.
- By June 1987, CAIRS and the State Library will convene a meeting of state agencies which sponsor I&R programs to share information, share mutual concerns, work more closely together, enhance communication and explore opportunities for coordination of activities.
- Ongoing, CAIRS, CLA and the State Library will encourage local libraries to participate in local I&R networks, as described in the standards/guidelines.

NEED: PROMOTE I&R AS A CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY INFORMATION (INCLUDING HUMAN SERVICES) TO LIBRARIES THAT DO NOT NOW HAVE IT

- By 2pm December 5, 1986, this group will appoint a committee to develop an LSCA proposal to hold a statewide conference on incorporating community information as an integral part of traditional reference services. (Committee appointed: Terence Crowley, Ruth Foley Metz, Richard Stahl, Carol Williams Bryant)
- For presentation at the 1988 statewide conference, a task force will develop and disseminate tools to assist libraries in developing community information services.
- By winter 1989, CSL, local libraries, CLA and CAIRS will develop a major media campaign regarding the availability of information about human resources through public libraries.
- By spring 1989, CLSB will promote and encourage library community information as a possible focus of cooperative public library system activity:
  a. by informing public library and public library systems that community information service is a component of reference service.
  b. by requesting documentation of community information programming in annual Plans of Service at both local and system levels by adding to the form a section in which local library community information services and programs can be reported.

What Should the State Library be Doing in the Next Two-Three Years to Promote I&R?

The Roundtable participants generated the following ideas:

- encourage use of consultant librarians in LSCA proposals
- make two I&R proposals from this retreat a priority for LSCA funding
- recognize needs of multi-lingual community in providing community information
- commit to continue staff for I&R
- recognize I&R needs of special populations where there are gaps in service
- write I&R plan in consideration of other emerging state level policies e.g. reference referral policy and multi-type networking policy and Dervin studies
- encourage local libraries to publish successes and failures in I&R projects

Next Steps

The Roundtable identified processes for retreat follow-up:

- PLA guidelines review ad hoc group will send recommendations to Marty, Martin, R. Stahl, before sending to CAIRS, CLA
- committee for LSCA proposal appointed: R. Stahl, Terry, Ruth, Carol, CAIRS (Linda)
- discuss definitions: I&R - community information
- proposal will provide for a committee that will help plan content for conference, identify needed tools
- summary report to State Librarian, participants and outside speakers who were invited, by January 15
- response from State Librarian to participants and speakers with particular emphasis on issue of commitment from State Library, by end of February
- comments by participants and outside speakers, as necessary, back to State Librarian, by end of March
- if necessary, if problems exist, reconvene group
- draft I&R policy plan from State Library to participants
- reconvene group for one day to comment on plan
- Yolanda/Richard to review budget
- draft plan to library community for comment

Closing Remarks
Yolanda Cuesta, Bureau Chief, Library Development Services Bureau

Yolanda Cuesta thanked the participants for their efforts and expressed her pleasure that significant progress had been made in formulating a plan and focus for I&R services.